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## **JESUS THE MESSIAH.**

– *MARCH 1. – Luke 9:18-27. –*

**Golden Text – "This is my beloved Son: hear him." – Luke 9:35.**

FOR treatment of the major part of this lesson see our issue of January 15, 1895 – "The Good Confession."

The Lord's command to his disciples to refrain from bold assertions that he was the Christ, which, coming from them, his intimate friends and disciples, would have had about the same effect as if coming from himself, was a wise one. He preferred to give the people the evidences, rather than the assertions, of his Messiahship, and to let the logic of his mighty works lead them to the only reasonable conclusions.

Our Lord's words following this command to tell no man, show the reasonings on which it was based – "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." Consequently if any followed him from any other motives than those of deep conviction and a heart desire to be in harmony with God, the trial coming would sweep them all away as chaff before the wind. But those who would follow him from a heart and head conviction of the truth, drawn from the clear testimony of the Scriptures and of his mighty works, would thus, by their settled convictions, be enabled to stand the tests of faith and endurance which must shortly follow. Even with this care, the faith of most of those who believed proved very superficial. They were swayed in judgment by the opposition of their leaders, and only a few stood firm in the midst of the trials following.

The Lord plainly taught his disciples that following him meant daily self-denial and cross-bearing. He showed them how he must suffer reproaches and persecutions, and that from a source whence it might least be expected – from the leaders and religious teachers of his day,

who were moved with envy and consequent hatred of one whose power and wisdom so far outstripped their own as to detract from their honor and esteem among the people. He showed them how he must suffer, even unto death, and that if they would follow him and continue to be his disciples, they must do as he did, – they must be willing to bear reproaches, and to suffer persecution even unto death. If they were not willing to do this, they were not worthy to be his disciples. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

The statement of verse 24 is applicable to those who, having entered into covenant relations with the Lord to lay down their lives in his service, subsequently ignore their covenant while they seek to save that which they had consecrated to God even unto death. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice insures eternal life as spiritual beings; while the repudiation of it would surely forfeit that life. And since by our covenant we have given up all claim upon the humanity and its hopes and aims, which we engaged to sacrifice, the result must be as the Lord states it: – "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." The reasoning of verse 25 is unanswerable, and should have its full weight with every consecrated soul. The assurances of verse 26 also claim most careful consideration.

The reference of verse 27 was to the vision of the Kingdom of God given typically on the mount of the transfiguration. On this subject see our issue of Jan. 15, '95.

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